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## Canada

### Market Promotion/ Competition

# Japanese Advisor to Promote Canadian Food Exports to Japan 1999

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**Report Highlights:** A Japanese trade advisor with the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) will begin a three-year assignment in Canada to promote Canadian agricultural exports to Japan. The appointment is the result of a joint agreement between the Canadian government and JETRO which already has offices in Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver. After the United States, Japan is Canada's second largest export market for food and agricultural products. Canadian agricultural exports to Japan peaked at \$1.8 billion in 1997, but slipped to \$1.1 billion in 1998 reflecting market weakness caused by the Asian economic crisis.

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On July 20, 1999 Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) announced that a Japanese trade advisor has been posted to the Guelph, Ontario regional office of AAFC to assist Canadian companies in developing exports to Japan with a particular focus on processed foods and other high value consumer oriented agricultural products.

The following is an excerpt from the AAFC press release:

Begin text:

TORONTO, July 20, 1999 – Canadian companies seeking to develop or expand their markets in Japan now have expert advice close at hand.

Mitsuhiko Kushida, Senior Trade Adviser with the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO), will be stationed in the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) Ontario Regional Office in Guelph, with Canada-wide responsibilities. The three-year posting is the result of a joint agreement signed by JETRO, AAFC, and the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

The goal is to increase Canadian exports to Japan and create mutual investment opportunities in the two countries. In the short term, Mr. Kushida will work closely with Canadian firms interested in entering the Japanese market, with a strong focus on expanding the Japanese market for Canadian processed foods, organic and traditional crops, functional foods with health benefits, food ingredients, products for the food service industry and pet foods. In addition, Mr. Kushida will facilitate trade missions between Japan and Canada, and organize seminars to educate Canadian exporters on business opportunities in Japan.

"We look to Japan as an important partner in both trade and investment and our two countries have a long history and bright future in doing business together," said Agriculture and Agri-Food Minister Lyle Vancilief. "Because of the efforts of business people in Japan and Canada, supported by Canadian government officials in Canada and in Japan, trade between the two countries in agricultural and food products rose 50 per cent between 1994 and 1997."

In 1997, Canada exported C\$2.5 billion worth of agri-food and beverage products to Japan. Japan is Canada's second largest foreign market for agri-food and seafood products.

"The appointment of Mr. Kushida as JETRO's Senior Trade Adviser in Guelph will build on the solid, long-standing trading relationship we have with Japan," said International Trade Minister Sergio Marchi. "Businesses in both countries will benefit from sharing information on new technologies, products and markets."

"JETRO is committed to the Team Canada approach and works closely with all levels of government and industry organizations in supporting Canadian companies in their efforts to enter the Japanese market," said Nobuhiko Yoshida, Executive Director, JETRO Toronto. "Canada's increased exports to Japan are due to excellent efforts by Canadians and a dynamic market in Japan. This is all part of a trend in Japan of moving its imported goods profile away from commodities toward more value-added processed foods where Canadians are considered to be leaders."

JETRO is a non-profit, Japanese government-related organization dedicated to promoting mutually beneficial trade and economic relationships between Japan and other nations. Headquartered in Tokyo, JETRO has a network of 37 offices in Japan and 80 overseas offices located in 58 countries. JETRO has offices in Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver.

End text.

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